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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

V. L. XVI.]

TORONTO, MARCH 7, 1896.

[No. 10.]

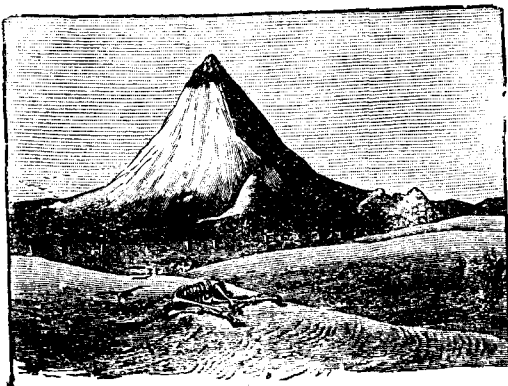
ARMENIAN ATROCITIES.

The dreadful massacres in Armenia, like the Bulgarian atrocities of eighteen years ago, have excited the horror of Europe. We glean from the press the following items respecting these peoples:

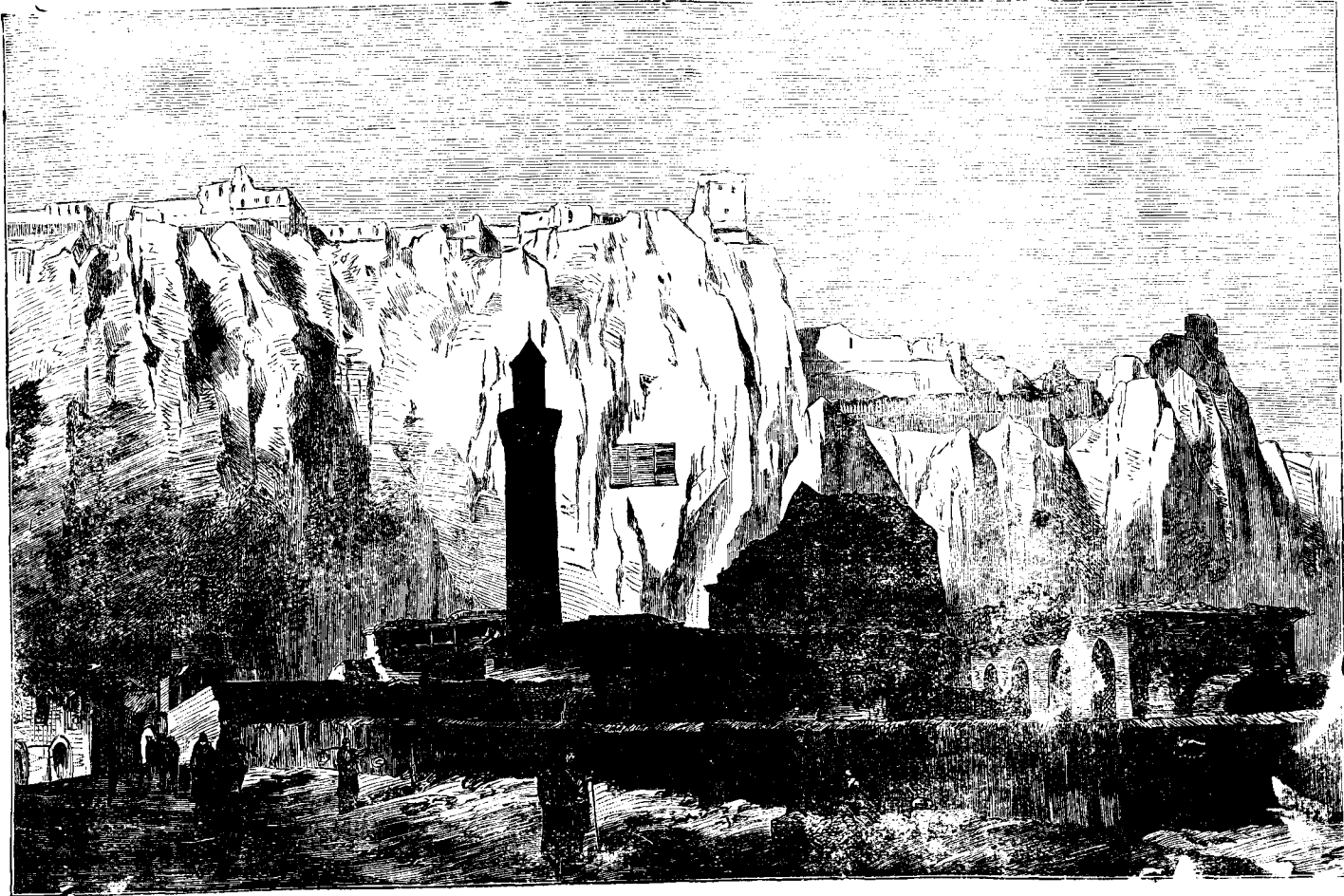
"In the rugged highlands and elevated plateaux which constitute North-eastern Turkey are scattered the last remnants of a race which once played a great part in the history of the region. The Armenians are unarmed, cowed by oppression, for centuries the unresisting prey of the savage brutality of their neighbours. The Kurd is armed, predatory and savage, and has for centuries ravaged these Armenian villages at will. When a dry season comes or when spring freshets drown the fields, the Kurdish flocks and herds perish of hunger, and their owners take the warpath, just as the English and Scottish borderers used to do in the days which Walter Scott has painted. To them Armenia is a happy hunting-ground. The soil is rich and the people well off; comfortable villages in the midst of thriving farms are encountered in every valley, and in attacking them the Kurds are encouraged by the thought that they are doing a work which is grateful to God, for the Armenians are Christians and are regarded by the followers of Ali as 'heathen hordes.' The word Kurd means a thief, a robber, a murderer, and a corsair. They flourished, probably in the same form as now, in the early ages of the Babylonian empire, and the young men served in Nebuchadnezzar's army.

ASPECT OF THE COUNTRY.

Armenia is an upland region, mostly within the present limits of Asiatic Tur-



MOUNT ARARAT, ON ARMENIAN FRONTIER, HEIGHT, 17,212 FEET.



CITY OF VAN, ARMENIA.

key, but extending also into the adjacent regions of Russia and Persia. The Euphrates and the Tigris have their origin in its highlands. Its highest mountain is Ararat, which rises more than three miles above the sea. A volcanic eruption of Ararat and a disastrous earthquake occurred in 1840. The country has great agricultural possibilities, but on account of the misgovernment of the Turk much of the land is unimproved. During the Crimean war, Sir William Fenwick Williams, a native of Nova Scotia, held a fortress of Kars for many weeks against an overwhelming force of Russians. No accurate census of the Armenians has been taken, but the number has been estimated from two and a half to twelve millions—there are probably two and a half millions in the Turkish empire alone.

The Armenians profess to be the first nation which unitedly embraced Christianity. It is even asserted that their king Abgar, afflicted with a disease like leprosy, wrote a letter to Jesus of Nazareth, and that Jesus promised to send a disciple who would cure his malady and preach to his people the Gospel of the new kingdom of God. The legend goes on to say that Thaddeus, Bartholomew and Jude were all martyred in Armenia.

The Armenians, adapting the great doctrines of Christianity, have corrupted them with the worship of saints and pictures, and with superstitious rites and ceremonies. They have 155 fast-days, and their services are performed in the ancient Armenian language now unknown to the people. We have visited many of the Armenian churches and were personally presented to the Armenian patriarch in Jerusalem.

The costume of their priests is like that shown in the cut. There are flourishing Presbyterian missions in Armenia with several hundreds of students and schools and many hundreds of members.

RECENT OUTRAGES.

"War, famine, and pestilence all at once. Pity this poor country!" So writes an American correspondent at Bitlis, in Armenia. Other letters received in New York and Boston from correspondents of unimpeachable truthfulness substantiate in general the reports of the atrocities hitherto printed. The slaughter began with attacks upon the Armenian villages by the barbarous Kurds, in retaliation for some slight resistance made against their plundering. The Kurds then sent word to Constantinople that the Armenians were in rebellion, and Turkish troops were sent to the scene at once, with orders to suppress the revolt—orders which they well knew they must interpret to mean the extermination of whole villages, if they would please the Sultan.

The whole Empire is seething with a sense of outrage; and unless something is done before long, those who are best qualified to speak dread a long period of anarchy, to be overcome simply by the absolute destruction of the Turkish Government and the entering in of some foreign power. Naturally all eyes turn to England and Russia, the two powers most interested in that region.

GLADSTONE ON THE ARMENIAN ATROCITIES.

On his eighty-fifth birthday England's Grand Old Man received at Hawarden a deputation of Armenian Christians, and said: "Don't let me be told that one nation has no authority over another. Every nation, aye, every human being, has authority in behalf of humanity and justice. I have lived to see the Empire of Turkey in Europe reduced to less than

one-half what it was when I was born, and why? Simply because of its misdeeds and the great record written by the hand of Almighty God against its injustice, lust and most abominable cruelty."

AN ARMENIAN CITY.

Van, a town of Turkish Armenia, 145 miles south-east of the city of Erzeroum, near the east shore of Lake Van. Its population is about 35,000. It is in a beautiful region of fruit trees and gardens. Coarse cotton cloth is made and exported, and there are salt refineries.

A rocky hill with a ruined citadel extends over one mile; inside the citadel are vast caves with cuneiform inscriptions and other relics referred to the days of Semiramis, who, according to trad-

dition, laid out the city on a magnificent scale, and resided there in summer; hence the Armenian name, "City of Semiramis." It is situated on the celebrated salt lake of Van, the largest in Armenia, about 1,400 square miles in extent, and 5,400 feet (according to Rawlinson) above the sea level. It is surrounded by high mountains, reaching in parts the level of perpetual snow, alternating with beautiful plains.

THE OLDEST LAND IN THE WORLD.

Armenia, one of the oldest and most remarkable countries on the globe, a country once rich and populous and powerful, is, like every other land that has suffered the curse of Turkish rule, now desolate. There was a time when



ARMENIAN PATRIARCH.

the Armenians numbered at least 25,000,000 population, but now it is estimated that not more than 5,000,000 remain in their native and well-beloved land, while 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 more are wanderers to and fro over the earth, sober, industrious, economical citizens of many lands, and well-to-do in every country but their own. They would do well there also were it not for the Turks. The Ottoman Empire has proved itself a national curse, a sore, an ulcer among nations.

ADAM AN ARMENIAN

It is a land so old in history that the earliest legends of the human race point to it as the first home of mankind, that somewhere in the region now generally designated as Armenia, the human race first began. The Garden of Paradise was in Armenia. Adam was an Armenian; so was Noah, for his ark rested on Ararat, where, according to popular tradition, it remains to this day. From Armenia began the dispersion of the nations, and all the legends of the early days point the finger back toward that singular land at the head-waters of the Euphrates and Tigris as a home of every nation that preserved a memory of its own origin.

Under even a passable form of government Armenia would be a singularly prosperous country, but the curse of Turkish misrule has blighted every hope of the inhabitants.

TAXATION

Industry is checked, for no one knows the amount of taxes that will be required of him, nor, indeed, can he be certain that the products of his field have been garnered, they will not all be eaten or carried off by bands of irregular Turkish troops, who will consider themselves singularly forbearing if they do not also take his life. Instances have been known of farmers who raised a hundred bushels of grain and saw eighty-five bushels carried off under the name of taxes, to feed a rapacious soldiery.

LETTER FROM VAN.

Already the official report of one hundred and seventy-six ruined, plundered villages has been received. Rumours come of whole villages forcibly converted to Islam, of the murder of many helpless people, especially of priests and other ecclesiastics, and of wholesale pillaging.

The condition of this city, so far as the daily bread of the people is concerned, goes on bad to worse daily. Since the last of October, the shops and all business have been suspended. This throws nearly the entire population out of employment—a population already so poor that its utmost exertions barely sufficed to keep the wolf from the door in ordinary times.

The carnival of slaughter has been continued with tireless energy and terrible ferocity by the Turks and Kurds. From every side come reports of atrocities by Turks, Kurds, and Circassians—villages swept by fire, the men massacred, the women either slain or reserved for a fate worse than death. Thousands of women have been carried away captive to become inmates of some vile Moslem harem. An illustration of the Turkish method of extermination is found in the case of the village of Hoh, in the Sandjak district. At first the aghas (or local magistrates) promised to protect the Christians, but when they saw villages burning in every direction, they refused to keep their word. All the Christians were told that under the pain of death, they must accept Islam. They were assembled at the Mosque, and there eighty young men were picked out and led outside the village—for slaughter. Eight escaped, sixty-two were killed, and ten wounded. The young women of the village were taken to Turkish harems, and the survivors of the Christian population were scattered among other villages.

In every district there is the same tragic story of massacre, outrage, pillage, and abduction; monasteries sacked, and Christian pastors and people butchered. In many villages the Armenian priests were among the number who laid down their lives as a testimony to the faith. In almost every village the strong men and youths were killed, and in nearly every case they met death with the fer-

ocity of true martyrs. Many were killed with horrible tortures, because of their refusal to deny Christ.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH 7, 1896.

A GIRL QUEEN AND A BOY KING.

BY RUTH ABBOTT.

The "first children of Europe," as I suppose they would generally be called, are the gentle, fair-haired girl who sits on the throne of the Netherlands, and the dark-eyed boy, half Austrian and half Spanish, who, though but ten years of age, is the lawful king of Spain.

Little Alfonso's mother, Maria Christina was an Austrian princess—archduchess is the proper title, I believe. By marrying King Alfonso XII. of Spain, she became a queen, and now that he is dead she is "regent," or acting queen until her little boy shall be sixteen years of age and wear his father's crown. The father came to the throne at the time of great excitement in the country, when the people were doubtful whether or not they wanted any more kings, and there are still a good many wise people in Spain who think that a republic with a president would be better than a throne with a king.

Little Alfonso never saw his father, who left this world some weeks before his only son was born. The health of the infant was very frail at first, but you can imagine how carefully the queen, his mother, and his nurses and teachers have watched over him, to keep him out of draughts, to see that he is properly clothed, and that he does not stuff his royal stomach too full of candy and cake. Maria Christina is a good mother, and has herself looked after his books and studies, and kept him with her as much as possible.

From his birth until he succeeds to the throne, the child of a king is the special object of interest to the subject people. Salutes of cannon are fired when he is born. His name is weighted and lengthened by honors and inherited titles, and his christening is the occasion of a national holiday. His childhood is hedged about with pomp and ceremony, and much of the freedom of happy hours of coveted play is spent in learning foreign languages and studying how to build forts and lead an army. The stern rigours of court etiquette cannot, however, entirely control the high spirits of the young king of Spain. Quite recently he has been placed under the especial care of an ambassador's son, as the result of his escapades with a squirtgun which some one sent him from Vienna. In his mischief costly paintings and rare old tapestries were stained with water, while ladies-in-waiting, and even a stately general, blazing to his gorgeous uniform

pranks of the fun-loving boy. His glee increased, so the story goes, the more mischief he did.

Let young Alfonso squirt while he may. Already the people of Spain have the right to vote on some questions, and some fine day the dark-eyed lad may wake up to find that they have voted him out and decided to choose their own ruler, instead of taking the one who happened to be born in a palace.

On the throne of brave little sea-threatened Holland, with its 27,000,000 colonial subjects, sits another child ruler, whose full name is Wilhelmina Helena Paulina Marie, the sweet Queen Wilhelmina. Born at the Hague in 1880, the young queen will be sixteen the thirty-first of next August.

Her father, William III., was one of an illustrious line which includes such names of historic interest as that of William the Silent, Maurice and Frederick Henry, both famous military commanders, and William II., who was also England's king. Her mother is a princess of the German reigning family, and, as queen dowager and regent, Emma is greatly beloved by the people she governs during the minority of Queen Wilhelmina.

The young queen mastered both English and French, besides her native Dutch, before she was eleven years old, and has been carefully trained for the arduous duties that rest heavily on crowned heads.

Her life has been simple. Rising at seven, she was in the habit of breakfasting at eight with her parents, previous to the death of her father in 1890. After breakfast came lessons in Dutch and arithmetic until 9.30. At 10.30 she went to her mother's room, where together they learned new lessons from the Bible. As she turned the pages of the sacred book, charmed by the beautiful pictures, her mother read the Bible stories and explained the deep truths contained therein. Then together they knelt while the queenly mother prayed for her queen daughter that God would fit her for the work she had to do in life. At 6.30 p.m. came dinner, and at 8 p.m. the little queen's day was done. With a youth so simple, yet so carefully ordered, it is little wonder that the people of Holland love their young queen, and look with eager interest to the time when she will reign in her own right.

The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna.

BY G. WOLFE.

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,

As his corse to the rampart we hurried;

Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,

The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,

And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,

Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;

But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the words we said

And we spoke not a word of sorrow,
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that
was dead,

And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollow'd his narrow bed,

And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread
o'er his head,

And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,

And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep
on

In the grave where a Briton has laid
him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for re-
tiring:

And we heard the distant and random
gun

That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and
gory;

We carved not a line, and we raised not
a stone—

But we left him alone with his glory.



JUNIOR LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

March 8, 1896.

The little maid of Naaman's wife.—2
Kings 5. 2, 3. (Missionary.)

This little maid was a slave. People often complain when they are asked to do anything for God, that their position in life is such that it is impossible for them to do as requested. Surely none of us can be in a position more unlikely for doing good than that which this poor little girl occupied,— a slave, taken from home, no mother near to whom she could relate her tale of sorrow.

See her situation! She was servant in the house of a great man who stood high in the estimation of the king of Syria. She possessed one thing which her master did not, viz., health. Which of us value health as we ought to do? Take care of your health, use the kind of food which is most conducive to health. Never use tobacco, nor intoxicating liquors, for both are injurious as well as filthy and debasing.

The master was a leper, afflicted with that loathsome disease which, thank God, is seldom seen in our country, though exceedingly prevalent in the East. Her heart was affected as she looked upon her master from day to day. Do our readers always feel sorry when they see others suffer? I know some good people who, when they meet any of their fellowmen who are either wholly or partially blind, or who have lost one of their limbs, always thank God that they are not afflicted as those poor objects of humanity are.

Listen to what she said, verse 3. Piteous words may be very good, even if no deeds accompany them, but deeds are more acceptable when they can be performed. Kind words proceed from a sympathetic heart. We sometimes sing, "Kind words can never die." Those who have been benefited should always seek to benefit others. How inspiring are these words.

"Oh that the world might taste and see,
The riches of his grace,
The arms of love that compass me,
Would all mankind embrace."

The leprosy of sin has affected mankind. Men, women, and children are suffering from it by millions. We possess the only remedy for this fearful malady, viz., the Gospel. Every Christian should either carry the Gospel to the perishing or send it to them. It will not do to merely sing, "Rescue the perishing," we must use means to rescue them. An infidel once said, that if he believed God had given his Son to die for the world, and that people should know this, he would go around the world and tell it. Read John 3. 16. We believe this verse, now our duty is to make it known.

All are not called to go to the ends of the earth to publish this grand doctrine, but such as are called should be willing to go, even if they should suffer hardships, and persecutions, and even death itself. Soldiers are not to be afraid, nor run away in the time of danger, they are to stand fast and conquer or die. Soldiers of the cross must do the same.

We must support those who thus go forth. Sunday-school children have done noble deeds in connection with Missions. The first missionary ship, that was known by the name of John Williams, the "Martyr of Erromanga," was paid for by money collected by Sunday-school children. Last year the juvenile offerings of the Methodist Missionary Society in Canada amounted to \$23,929.76. How much of this did you give?

After Blenheim.

BY ROBERT SOUTHEY.

It was a summer evening,
Old Kasper's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found;
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kasper took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
" Who fell in the great victory.

" I find them in the garden,
For there's many hereabout;
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out.
For many thousand men," said he,
" Were slain in that great victory."

" Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
" Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

" It was the English," Kasper cried
" Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out.
But everybody said," quoth he,
" That 'twas a famous victory."

" My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly:
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

" With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a chiding mother then
And newborn baby died:
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

" They said it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

" Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene;"
" Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine;
" Nay—nay—my little girl," quoth he,
" It was a famous victory."

" And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
" But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin:—
" Why that I cannot tell," said he,
" But 'twas a famous victory."

After the war crazes the world has
been indulging in lately, it will be well
to ask what it was all about, and to
realize the dreadful cost of " a famous
victory."

THE STORY OF JESSICA.

CHAPTER VII.

HARD QUESTIONS.

Daniel had no opportunity for speaking to Jessica; for, after waiting until the minister left the vestry, he found that she had gone away by the side entrance. He had to wait therefore, until Wednesday morning, and the sight of her pinched little face was welcome to him when he saw it looking wistfully over the coffee-stall. Yet he had made up his mind to forbid her to come again, and to threaten her with the policeman if he ever caught her at the chapel, where for the future he intended to keep a sharper look-out. But before he could speak Jess had slipped under the stall, and taken her old seat upon the up-turned basket.

" Mr. Dan'el," she said, " has God paid you for my cup of coffee yet?"

" Paid me?" he repeated; " God? No." " Well, he will," she answered, nodding her head sagely; " don't you be afraid of your money, Mr. Dan'el; I've asked him a many times, and the minister says he's sure to do it."

" Jess," said Daniel, sternly, " have you been and told the minister about my coffee-stall?"

" No," she answered, with a beaming smile, " but I've told God lots and lots of times since Sunday, and he's sure to pay in a day or two."

" Jess," continued Daniel, more gently, " you're a sharp little girl, I see; and now, mind, I'm going to trust you. You're never to say a word about me or my coffee-stall; because the folks at our chapel are very grand, and might think it low and mean of me to keep a coffee-stall. Very likely they'd say I musn't be chapel-keeper any longer, and I should lose a deal of money."

" Why do you keep the stall, then?" asked Jessica.

" Don't you see what a many pennies I get every morning?" he said, shaking his canvas bag. " I get a good deal of money that way in a year."

" What do you want such a deal of money for?" she inquired; " do you give it to God?"

Daniel did not answer, but the question went to his heart like a sword-thrust. What did he want so much money for? He thought of his one bare, solitary room, where he lodged alone, a good way from the railway-bridge, with very few comforts in it, but containing a desk, strongly and securely fastened, in which was his savings-bank book and his receipts for money put out at interest, and a bag of sovereigns, for which he had been toiling and slaving both on Sundays and week-days. He could not remember giving anything away, except the dregs of the coffee and the stale buns, for which Jessica was asking God to pay him. He coughed, and cleared his throat, and rubbed his eyes; and then, with nervous and hesitating fingers, he took a penny from his bag, and slipped it into Jessica's hand.

" No, no, Mr. Dan'el," she said; " I don't want you to give me any of your pennies. I want God to pay you."

" Ay, he'll pay me," muttered Daniel; " there'll be a day of reckoning by-and-by."

" Does God have reckoning days?" asked Jessica. " I used to like reckoning days when I was a fairy."

" Ay, ay," he answered; " but there's few folks like God's reckoning days."

" But you'll be glad, won't you?" she said.

Daniel bade her get on with her breakfast, and then he turned over in his mind the thoughts which her questions had awakened. Conscience told him he would not be glad to meet God's reckoning day.

" Mr. Dan'el," said Jessica, when they were about to separate, and he would not take back his gift of a penny, " if you wouldn't mind, I'd like to come and buy a cup of coffee to-morrow, like a customer, you know; and I won't let out a word about the stall to the minister next Sunday, don't you be afraid."

She tied the penny carefully into a corner of her rags, and, with a cheerful smile upon her thin face, she glided from under the shadow of the bridge, and was soon lost to Daniel's sight.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

When Jessica came to the street into which the court where she lived opened, she saw an unusual degree of excitement among the inhabitants, a group of whom were gathered about a tall gentleman, whom she recognized in an instant to be the minister. She elbowed her way through the midst of them, and the minister's face brightened as she presented herself before him. He followed her up the low entry, across the squalid court, through the stable, empty of the donkeys just then, up the creaking rounds of the ladder, and into the miserable loft, where the tiles were falling in, and the broken window-panes were stuffed with rags and paper. Near to the old rusty stove, which served as a grate when there was any fire, there was a short board laid across some bricks, and upon this the minister took his seat, while Jessica sat upon the floor before him.

" Jessica," he said, sadly, " is this where you live?"

" Yes," she answered, " but we'd a nicer room than this when I was a fairy, and mother played at the theatre; we shall be better off when I'm grown up, if I'm pretty enough to play like her."

" My child," he said, " I'm come to ask your mother to let you go to school in a pleasant place down in the country. Will she let you go?"

" No," answered Jessica, " mother says she'll never let me learn to read, or go to church; she says it would make me good for nothing. But please, sir, she doesn't know anything about your church, it's such a long way off, and she hasn't found me out yet. She always gets very drunk of a Sunday."

The child spoke simply, and as if all she said was a matter of course; but the minister shuddered, and he looked through the broken window to the little patch of gloomy sky overhead.

" What can I do?" he cried mournfully, as though speaking to himself.

" Nothing, please, sir," said Jessica; " only let me come to hear you of a Sunday, and tell me about God. If you was to give me fine clothes like your little girls, mother 'ud only pawn them for gin. You can't do anything more for me."

" Where is your mother?" he asked.

" Out on a spree," said Jessica, " and she won't be home for a day or two. She'd not hearken to you, sir. There's the missionary came, and she pushed him down the ladder, till he was nearly killed. They used to call mother the Vixen at the theatre, and nobody durst say a word to her."

The minister was silent for some minutes, thinking painful thoughts, for his eyes seemed to darken as he looked round the miserable room, and his face wore an air of sorrow and disappointment. At last he spoke again.

" Who is Mr. Daniel, Jessica?" he inquired.

" Oh!" she said cunningly, " he's only a friend of mine as gives me sups of coffee. You don't know all the folks in London, sir!"

" No," he answered, smiling; " but does he keep a coffee-stall?"

Jessica nodded her head, but did not trust herself to speak.

" How much does a cup of coffee cost?" asked the minister.

" A full cup's a penny," she answered, promptly; " but you can have half a cup; and there are halfpenny and penny buns."

" Good coffee and buns?" he said, with another smile.

" Prime," replied Jessica, smacking her lips.

" Well," continued the minister, " tell your friend to give you a full cup of coffee and a penny bun every morning, and I'll pay for them as often as he chooses to come to me for the money."

Jessica's face beamed with delight, but in an instant it clouded over as she recollected Daniel's secret, and her lips quivered as she spoke her disappointed reply.

" Please, sir," she said, " I'm sure he couldn't come; oh! he couldn't. It's such a long way, and Mr. Daniel has plenty of customers. No, he never would come to you for the money."

" Jessica," he answered, " I will tell you what I will do. I will trust you with a shilling every Sunday, if you'll promise to give it to your friend the very first time you see him. I shall be sure to know if you cheat me." And the keen, piercing eyes of the minister looked down into Jessica's, and once more the tender and pitying smile returned to his face.

" I can do nothing else for you?" he said, in a tone of mingled sorrow and questioning.

" No, minister," answered Jessica; " only tell me about God."

" I will tell you one thing about him now," he replied. " If I took you to live in my house with my little daughters, you would have to be washed and clothed in new clothing to make you fit for it. God wanted us to go and live at home with him in heaven, but we were so sinful that we could never have been fit for it. So he sent his own Son to live amongst us, and die for us, to wash us from our sins, and to give us new clothing, and to make us ready to live in God's house. When you ask God for anything, you must say, ' For Jesus

Christ's sake.' Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

After these words the minister carefully descended the ladder, followed by Jessica's bare and nimble feet, and she led him by the nearest way into one of the great thoroughfares of the city, where he said good-bye to her, adding, " God bless you, my child," in a tone which sank into Jessica's heart. He had put a silver sixpence into her hand to provide for her breakfast the next three mornings, and, with a feeling of being very rich, she returned to her miserable home.

The next morning Jessica presented herself proudly as a customer at Daniel's stall, and paid over the sixpence in advance. He felt a little troubled as he heard her story, lest the minister should endeavour to find him out; but he could not refuse to let the child come daily for her comfortable breakfast. If he was detected, he would promise to give up his coffee-stall rather than offend the great people of the chapel; but unless he was, it would be foolish of him to lose the money it brought in week after week.

(To be continued.)

BE CHRISTIANS NOW.

I was greatly interested in an address which Bishop Goodsell made to a company of young preachers who were about to be received into the annual conference. A large congregation was present. Everyone was listening eagerly. The bishop spoke of several qualities which ministers should have. Then he remarked: " Dear young brethren, be sure and care for the children. They are not too young to be converted. They should all be in the Church. Why, the great mass of those who make up the membership of the Church to-day were converted while they were yet children." To show that this was really so Bishop Goodsell used the congregation as an illustration.

" All who were converted before they were ten years of age, stand up," he said. Nearly half the great congregation arose.

" Now, all who were converted before they were fifteen, arise," he continued. A large number stood up.

" Now let us see how many were converted before they were twenty," he said. At this invitation many more arose.

" You see, my brethren," said the bishop, with moistened eyes, " that more than three-fourths of this great congregation now testify that they were converted to God before they were twenty; many while they were yet little children." The words of Bishop Goodsell, and especially this vote of the people, made a deep impression upon those who were present, and made us see more clearly than we ever had the vital importance of our girls and boys giving their lives to the Saviour. If they fail to do so, the chances are that they will not do it in after life. Very few persons are converted after they pass middle life. Indeed, not many begin the service of Christ after they have passed the limits of youth.

I am glad that in our day there is so much anxiety for the salvation of the dear girls and boys. Just now, how many fathers and mothers are praying for their children! How many Sunday-school teachers are earnestly asking for the conversion of their pupils! How many Junior superintendents are praying and longing to have the members of the Junior League become true Christians! Dear girls and boys, will you not decide now to become the Lord's own obedient children? God is love. He loves you. He wants your love. He wants your glad service. He hears the feeblest cry of the sincere soul. He waits to receive you. I hope all the members of our Junior Leagues everywhere who have not already become sincere followers of the Master will do so now. Now is the best time. Now may be the only time. Now is your time.—Epworth Herald.

A youth of fortune and fame unknown sent Dumas the manuscript of a new play, asking the great dramatist to become his collaborateur. Dumas was for a moment petrified; then he seized his pen and replied: " How dare you, sir, propose to yoke together a horse and an ass?" The author, by return post, wrote: " How dare you, sir, call me a horse?" Dumas, by next mail, answered: " Send me your play, my friend." —Selected.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

LESSON XI.—MARCH 15.

TEACHING ABOUT PRAYER.

Luke 11. 1-13. Memory verses, 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.—Luke 11. 9.

Time.—November, A.D. 29.

Place.—Judea, near Jerusalem.

CONNECTING LINKS.

Immediately after telling the story of the good Samaritan, Jesus visited Bethany, which lay two miles east of Jerusalem. Here he was received into the home of Martha and Mary, who honoured the Master they loved by preparing for him a rich feast. Lest people should infer from the story of last lesson that religion consisted altogether in deeds of kindness, Jesus taught at this feast the need of meditation, of sitting at his feet and hearing his word. A few days later his disciples overheard him pray such a powerful prayer that when he ceased one of them asked him to teach them to pray. Our lesson gives his answer.

DAY BY DAY WORK.

Monday.—Read the Lesson (Luke 11. 1-13). Prepare to tell in your own words the last lesson and this.

Tuesday.—Read about the right and wrong kinds of prayer (Matt. 6. 1-15). Fix in your mind Time, Place, and Connecting Links.

Wednesday.—Read about prayer in Christ's name (John 16. 23-33). Learn the Golden Text.

Thursday.—Read what we may get if we ask in faith (1 John 5. 9-15). Learn the Memory Verses.

Friday.—Read the story of how a brave woman won her case (Luke 18. 1-8). Answer the Questions.

Saturday.—Read what prayer did for a sick man (2 Kings 20. 1-12). Study Teachings of the Lesson.

Sunday.—Read a king's testimony (Psalm 34. 1-10). Sing the Lesson Hymn.

QUESTIONS.

1. The Model Prayer, verses 1-4.—1. Who asked Jesus to be taught to pray? Were forms of prayer then common? 2. Should we pray "The Lord's Prayer"? If we are God's children how may we show it? How do we hallow God's name? What do we mean when we pray for his kingdom? How is God's will done in heaven? 3. What does our daily bread include? 4. Do we pray that we may have no temptations? What then?

2. A Story about Prayer, verses 5-8. 5. Why did Jesus describe the guest coming at midnight? 6. What is the custom in the East regarding hospitality? 7. How did the needy man's friend excuse himself? 8. What made him change his mind?

3. The Law of Prayer, verses 9-13.—9. How do we know that prayer will be answered? How must we seek? 10. What kind of blessing will never be denied us? 11. What do the loaf, the fish, and the egg resemble? 13. Name some things implied in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

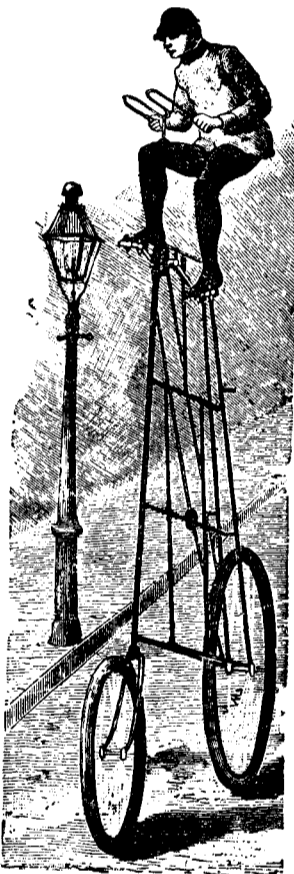
Jesus set us an example of prayerfulness. The wish to learn how to pray is pleasing to Christ. Happy for those who have a Father so great and good! We should cultivate reverence for sacred things. It is right to ask for temporal blessings. We must forgive if we would be forgiven. The better we know our own weakness the less confidence we will have in ourselves. Difficulties should only increase our earnestness in prayer.

Any person found cultivating the tobacco plant in Egypt will henceforth be fined one thousand dollars. The khedive has recently issued a decree prohibiting the culture of this noxious weed.—Sel.

A CURIOUS BICYCLE.

One of the most curious sights that has lately been seen in the streets of New York is what has felicitously been called the Eiffel Tower Bicycle. This machine is constructed on the same principle as an ordinary safety, but it has a frame superstructure which carries the rider at a distance of some ten feet from terra firma. This machine is frequently seen on the avenues of the city, and the rider easily overtops the ordinary lamp posts along the route of travel. He seems to have perfect control over the machine, which he can drive at quite a good rate of speed, taking sharp corners with perfect ease and apparent safety. This bicycle is mounted from behind in the usual way, but it has to be held by attendants while mounting. The owner sometimes places the machine against a wall and mounts from a standstill, but, of course, in the city, this is not always practicable.

There is considerable difficulty in driving the bicycle up hill, owing partially to the weight, the length of the sprocket chain and the balance of the machine. The sprocket chain extends from the upper sprocket wheel to the rear wheel,



and the lateral swing or play of the chain is prevented by a guide roller mounted just above the back wheel. The front wheel measures twenty-eight inches, the rear wheel thirty-six inches, and the extreme height is said to be thirteen feet. The machine was constructed in England, but the American Dunlop tire was applied after it arrived in this country. The adventurous spirit who has been seen riding this remarkable wheel is usually accompanied by a number of companions who serve as a sort of bodyguard and prevent vehicles and pedestrians from obstructing the way.

SALT.

BY BISHOP WARREN.

What is salt? Where does it come from? How do they get it? Having just come from a great factory that ships four hundred barrels a day, I want our little readers to share our pleasure and information.

A boy once said that "salt was what made a potato taste so flat when you had none." The chemist says it is the chlorid of sodium. He spells it NaCl. It is composed of a metal so light that it floats upon water and runs about with a hissing sound, sometimes setting fire to the hydrogen evolved from the water. The other element of salt is a gas so suffocating that no one can breathe it and live. Yet salt is very necessary to all human life. It crystallizes in the form of cubes. "Attic salt" is wit that saves

a conversation from insipidity. It is not food. And moral salt is what saves the world from corruption. Christians are the salt of the earth.

Go down under the part of Kansas which underlies the region about Hutchinson, and you go through various layers of gravel having inexhaustible quantities of water that would make drouths impossible if the people ever would get sense enough to use irrigation, and at a depth of four hundred feet you come to a vast body of salt, nearly pure, hundreds of miles in extent, and at this point four hundred feet thick. It would be easy to sink a shaft, send down men, quarry out the rock, hoist it up and pulverize it for the market. That would involve a very expensive plant for hoisting, and the employment of many men as miners. They have an easier way here. They put down two pipes. Down one water is forced, and when it has saturated itself with salt, it rises up the other pipe, because more water is forced down. Thus one column of water balances the other, and a very little force is required to lift the salt dissolved in the water.

This strong brine is poured into great pans forty feet wide and a hundred feet long. Two divisions are made in the first end where any impurities may settle. Then under the last end of the great pan fire is put and the water is evaporated in clean steam, the salt crystallizes at the bottom and is hoed out up the shelving sides to a platform on the edge. There it is immaculately white, in great windrows along both edges of the half-dozen pans.

To prepare this salt for the table the dampness is dried out in a thirty-foot-long cylinder that revolves over a fire with one end higher than the other, and so about thirty tons will pass through in a day. The crystals are then ground into a fine flour. A smart girl will then put up fifteen hundred bags of it for a day's work, sewing up the end of each bag. I saw a boy sew up 140 pound bags with strong twine, the mouth of the bags being fourteen inches wide, at the rate of four bags a minute.

How this immense amount of salt ever came here is not known. Two theories are suggested. First, it was created there as it is, which is not at all likely. Secondly, it was deposited there when some salt lake was evaporated. This is full of unthinkable difficulties. The Dead Sea, Salt Lake, and Caspian Sea, all put together, would not afford salt enough to much more than begin this vast amount in Kansas. None of these lakes are salt enough to deposit anything now; except in lagoons and bays where the evaporation is enormous and the inflow somewhat limited, the water is not yet saturated. There are other great salt beds in Salzberg, Bavaria, Poland, indeed in nearly all parts of the world. They were probably all produced by the evaporation of great bodies of salt water. But there are thousands of great questions about this old earth which we do not know enough to answer.

Besides the necessity of salt for animal life, it is largely used in the industrial arts. From it is taken the chlorin for bleaching. Soda is often made from it; hence it is one base of soap and glass. It is used to preserve foods, as all sorts of fish, pork and beef, butter, etc. One part of salt to two of dry snow or pounded ice gives a temperature of five degrees below zero. Until this was known there was no ice-cream.

BEGIN RIGHT.

"Boys," said papa, coming in through the yard as the rain began to fall, "put on your rubber coats and boots, and run out and clear away the heap of dirt you threw up yesterday around the cistern platform. Make a little channel where the ground slopes for the water to run off below."

Hal and Horace thought this great fun, and were soon at work. But presently papa called from a window:

"You are not doing that right, boys. You've turned the water all toward the house. It will be running into the cellar window next thing you know. Turn your channel away from the house at once."

"But this is the easiest way to dig it now, papa," called Hal. "Before it does any harm we'll turn it off."

"Do it right in the beginning," said papa, in a voice that settled things. "Be-

gin right, no matter if it is more trouble. Then you will be sure that no harm will be done, and won't have to fix things afterward."

The boys did as they were told, and were just in time to keep a stream of water from reaching the cellar window. Soon after this, papa found Horace reading a book borrowed from one of the boys.

"That is not the kind of reading that I allow," he said. "Give it back at once."

"Please let me finish the book," pleaded Horace. "Then I can stop reading this kind before it does me any harm."

"No," said papa, repeating the lesson of the rainy day, "begin right in your reading, and in all your habits, and then you will not have to change. Take the right direction first, and then you'll be sure of it."—Selected.

CRABS MARCHING TO THE SEA.

A curious point in the history of the West Indian land crab is the fact that every year, when the rainy season has set in, they make a great excursion to the sea. Straight as a bee to its hive they march to the coast. If a wall or rock comes in their way, they climb over it instead of going around. If a house is the obstacle, they will seek to get through the doors or windows; but if this is not possible, they will climb over it. Those that fall back from considerable heights and get damaged in the tumble serve as food for their companions. So closely do these crabs march together that the noise of their shelly armour as they jostle each other resembles the rattling of the arms and accoutrements of a regiment of cuirassiers.—Sel.

A young Scotchman was boating with his lady-love on a sunny and breezy evening. He asked her tenderly if she would row with him in the same boat for life. "Same as now?" she asked, shyly. "Yes, just the same—forever." "Then I will," she whispered, "for I have the helm!"

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